



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIPLOMACY IN ACTION

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International



THE WAY FORWARD IN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN

"Our friends have fought and bled and died alongside us in Afghanistan. Now, we must come together to end this war successfully. For what's at stake is not simply a test of NATO's credibility – what's at stake is the security of our Allies, and the common security of the world."

President Barack Obama
West Point, NY, December 1, 2009

WEST POINT, NY, Dec. 1 -- President Barack Obama addressed the nation on the way forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan. He discussed the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan, including al Qaeda crossing the border into Pakistan, corruption, the drug trade, an under-developed economy, and insufficient security forces.

In his remarks, President Obama highlighted progress that has been made in the fight against the Taliban and al Qaeda, as well as challenges that remain with the Afghan government and security forces. He also discussed resources for building Afghanistan and transitioning US forces out. He said, "... as Commander-in-Chief, I have determined that it is in our vital national interest to send an additional 30,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan. After 18 months, our troops will begin to come home. These are the resources that we need to seize the initiative, while building the Afghan capacity that can allow for a responsible transition of our forces out of Afghanistan."

President Obama also discussed the role that a partnership with Pakistan plays in our engagement with Afghanistan. He said, "moving forward, we are committed to a partnership with Pakistan that is built on a foundation of mutual interest, mutual respect, and mutual trust. We will strengthen Pakistan's capacity to target those groups that threaten our countries, and have made it clear that we cannot tolerate a safe haven for terrorists whose location is known and whose intentions are clear. America is also providing substantial resources to support Pakistan's democracy and development. We are the largest international supporter for those Pakistanis displaced by the fighting. And going forward, the Pakistan people must know America will remain a strong supporter of Pakistan's security and prosperity..." [Read More: President Obama's Address to the Nation](#)

THREE CORE ELEMENTS OF OUR STRATEGY:

- A military effort to create the conditions for a transition;
- A civilian surge that reinforces positive action;
- An effective partnership with Pakistan.



Middle East Peace: Special Envoy for Middle East Peace Briefs on Israeli Settlement Issues

"The steps announced today are the result of a unilateral decision by the Government of Israel. This is not an agreement with the United States, nor is it an agreement with the Palestinians. United States policy on settlements remains unaffected and unchanged. As the President has said, America does not accept the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlements. We recognize that the Palestinians and other Arabs are concerned because Israel's moratorium permits the completion of buildings already started and limits the effect of the moratorium to the West Bank – concerns which we share."

George Mitchell, Special Envoy for Middle East Peace
Washington, DC, November 15, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC, Nov. 15 -- George Mitchell, Special Envoy for Middle East Peace discussed the Israeli government's announcement on moratorium on new settlement building. "I think it's important to look at this issue in a broader context, particularly how it affects the situation on the ground and how it can contribute to a constructive negotiating process that will ultimately lead to an end to the conflict and to a two-state solution. It falls short of a full settlement freeze, but it is more than any Israeli Government has done before, and can help move toward agreement between the parties...for the first time ever, an Israeli Government will stop housing approvals and all new construction of housing units and related infrastructure in West Bank settlements. That's a positive development," he said. [Read More](#) | [Secretary Clinton Statement on Israel's Announcement](#)

Window of Opportunity in Afghanistan

Special Briefing on Secretary Clinton's Recent Trip to Afghanistan and Pakistan

"We have been waiting a long time to work with a government that was a result of the elections. And whatever one thinks of the elections, they were not perfect...They produced a winner and a legitimate government with which we intend to work as closely as possible. As the Secretary said, we are encouraged by what we saw ...as a window of opportunity."



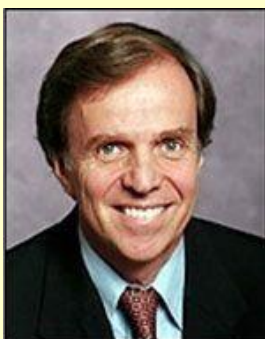
Richard Holbrooke, Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan
Washington, DC, November 23, 2009



WASHINGTON, DC, Nov. 23 -- Richard Holbrooke, Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan discussed Secretary Clinton's recent trip to Afghanistan and Pakistan. "This was her first trip to Afghanistan as Secretary of State, her fourth trip in her life, and it was a very important trip," he said. Ambassador Holbrooke discussed the results of the election, the inauguration, and the meetings that took place with the leadership in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

While in Afghanistan, Secretary Clinton attended President Karzai's inauguration ceremony, met with Afghanistan's leadership, international partners and allies, U.S. troops, staff in Provincial Reconstruction Teams, and Embassy staff. Ambassador Holbrooke said, "We are encouraged by what we saw during this trip. Secretary

Clinton described the moment that we saw a few days ago as a window of opportunity." [Read More](#) | [Secretary Clinton's Travel Page](#)



Political and Religious Freedom in the Middle East

"We seek a principled engagement with other nations on this issue— in a spirit of mutual interest and mutual respect...We are convinced that the freedom to profess, practice, and promote one's religion is a basic human right, a social good, a source of stability, and a key component of international security."

Michael H. Posner, Assistant Secretary
Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor
Washington, DC, November 19, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC, Nov. 19 -- Before the House Foreign Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on the Middle East and South

Asia, Michael H. Posner, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor discussed religious freedom conditions in the Middle East and what the Obama Administration is doing to encourage progress on religious freedom in the region. [Read More](#)

IAEA Resolution on Iran

WASHINGTON, DC, Nov. 27 -- The US Department of State hosted a conference call briefing with senior administration officials to discuss the [International Atomic Energy Agency's](#) Board of Governors' Resolution on Iran, the first such resolution since 2006. State Department Spokesman Ian Kelly moderated the call in which unnamed senior officials discussed the importance of the resolution citing that:

- "It sends a strong signal of serious international concern about Iran's continued noncompliance with obligations, both to the IAEA and to the UN Security Council, that it's essentially not playing by international rules."
- "It sends a strong signal of support for the IAEA, which is an enormously important organization, at a moment in history when we're trying to find ways to strengthen the Nonproliferation Treaty regime. It also sends a signal of support for the personal efforts of Mohamed ElBaradei, the outgoing director general of the IAEA, particularly with regard to his Tehran research reactor proposal."
- "It underscores the unity of purpose amongst the 5+1. The 5+1 countries – the U.S., Russia, China, France, Germany, and Britain – took the lead in putting this resolution together and strongly supported it throughout."



[Read More](#) | [Iran: Background Notes](#)

UN Calls on Iran to Address Serious Human Rights Violations

"In addition to longstanding concerns about the human rights situation in Iran, the resolution expresses deep concern about the brutal response of Iranian authorities to peaceful demonstrations in the wake of the June 12 election. It calls on the Government of Iran to abolish torture and arbitrary imprisonment, as well as any executions, including stoning, carried out without due process of law."

Robert Wood, Deputy Department Spokesman
Washington, DC, November 20, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC, Nov. 20 -- Robert Wood, Deputy Department Spokesman released a Statement on behalf of the US Department of State welcoming the resolution passed by the United Nations calling upon the Government of Iran to fully respect its human rights obligations. [Read More: Full Statement](#)

Inside the Beltway



Deepening Cooperation with India

"As the world's largest democracy and the world's oldest democracy, we are poised to collaborate on a number of fronts, from strengthening our security and confronting the threat of violent extremism, to fostering breakthroughs in science and technology, to increasing political, economic, and social opportunities for the world's women. India's emergence as a political and economic leader gives us the chance to widen opportunity in places that have been left out of global progress for so long. And the many ties that connect us, many evidenced here in this room, between families and businesses, universities, cultural institutions, and civil society groups, create so much potential for us to work together to improve the lives of citizens in both our countries."

Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State
Washington, DC, November 24, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC, Nov. 24 -- Secretary of State Hillary Clinton welcomed Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to the US Department of State for a luncheon in the Benjamin Franklin room. In her remarks, she said "...that the ability and the commitment of India and the United States to work together will be critical to our successes in both nations in addressing common challenges and achieving shared goals in the 21st century." [Read More](#) | [Prime Minister Singh's White House Visit](#)



20th Anniversary of the Fall of the Iron Curtain

"This year we are commemorating the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Iron Curtain. And that helped put Bulgaria on the path toward democracy and a market economy, both of which were reaffirmed in their recent elections. There was no way to know in 1989 how this would work out. But the transition, which has not always been easy, has made it possible for so many millions of people in Central and Eastern Europe to really have a place in charting their own future and making a claim to a better future, and I am very impressed by the remarkable progress that has been made."



Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State
Washington, DC, November 23, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC, Nov. 23 -- Secretary of State Hillary Clinton welcomed a Bulgarian delegation to the US Department of State. Following her meeting with the delegation, she and Bulgarian Foreign Minister Rumiana Zheleva delivered remarks commemorating the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Iron Curtain and highlighting both countries commitment to a strategic partnership, in which the US and Bulgaria work together on global and regional security. [Read More](#)

Upcoming Meeting of the Advisory Committee on International Law

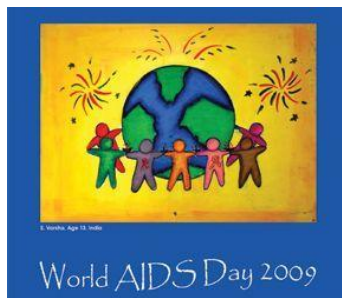
WASHINGTON, DC, Nov. 24 -- The US Department of State's Advisory Committee on International Law will meet on Friday, December 11, 2009, at the George Washington University Law School. The meeting will be chaired by the [Legal Adviser](#) of the Department of State, Harold H. Koh, and will be open to the public. It is anticipated that the agenda of the meeting will cover a range of current international legal topics, including treaty scope and enforcement issues, the relationship between human rights treaties and humanitarian law; issues relating to the International Criminal Court; options for compliance with the International Court of Justice's decision in the case concerning Avena and Other Mexican Nationals (Mexico v. United States of America); and the law of non-international armed conflict. Members of the public will have an opportunity to participate in the discussion. [Read More](#)

Global Issues Affecting the Nation

STRIVING TO ERADICATE HIV/AIDS

"Our Nation joins the world in celebrating the extraordinary advancements we have made in the battle against HIV and AIDS, and remembering those we have lost...On World AIDS Day, we rededicate ourselves to developing a national AIDS strategy that will establish the priorities necessary to combat this devastating epidemic at home, and to renewing our leadership role and commitments abroad."

- President Barack Obama



On World AIDS Day (December 1), we honor the millions of people around the world who have been impacted by the AIDS epidemic - those who are living with HIV, those we have lost, and the caregivers, families, friends and communities who have provided support. The United States remains firm in our commitment. Working together, we have begun to turn the tide against the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

- [World AIDS Day 2009: Latest PEPFAR Results](#)
- [Secretary Clinton's Remarks on the Administration's Efforts on HIV/AIDS](#)
- [Presidential Proclamation - World AIDS Day](#)

- [U.S. Government and the Global Fund Collaborate to Treat 3.7 Million Living with HIV/AIDS](#)

"Elimination of Violence Against Women" Day

"Violence against women cannot be accepted as 'cultural' -- it is criminal. Today, as we mark Elimination of Violence Against Women Day, let us recommit ourselves -- men and women in every country -- to work together to end these atrocities, to hold those who commit them accountable, and to support the survivors. No woman or girl anywhere in the world should have to walk in fear or live under the threat of violence."

Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State
Washington, DC, November 25, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC, Nov. 25 -- Secretary of State Hillary Clinton released a statement in honor of "Elimination of Violence Against Women" Day. She discussed the effects of violence against women globally and women's empowerment as a core pillar of American foreign policy. [Read More](#)

Making a Difference in Afghanistan

"We have a lot of confidence in all of you as you go out to Afghanistan to be able to make a difference...I have confidence that each of you can make a difference in the work you do, and I hope the training here has helped prepare you to go out and be as effective as we know you can be."



Jacob J. Lew, Deputy Secretary of State
Camp Atterbury, IN, November 19, 2009

CAMP ATTERBURY, IN, Nov. 19 -- Jacob Lew, Deputy Secretary of State visited Camp Atterbury-Muscatatuck Center for Complex Operations for a town hall meeting with a group of government representatives who are currently undergoing training to serve on Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan. "The key to this whole mission is that it's civilian-military cooperation," he said. [Read More](#)

U.S.-Brazil Celebrate Fifteen Years of Science and Technology Cooperation

WASHINGTON, DC, Nov. 20 -- United States and Brazilian representatives met today at the U.S. Department of State to mark 15 years of science and technology cooperation at a U.S.-Brazil Joint Commission Meeting on Science and Technology Cooperation. Dr. John Holdren, Assistant to the President for Science and Technology and Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, led the U.S. delegation which included high-ranking representatives from more than a dozen government agencies and research institutions. Minister Sergio Rezende, of the Brazilian Ministry for Science and Technology, headed the Brazilian delegation.

Dr. Nina Fedoroff, Science and Technology Adviser to the Secretary of State and Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, made welcoming remarks at the opening session. Dr. John Holdren described the Obama Administration's strategy for American innovation and presented the United States government's newly invigorated outlook for scientific and technological cooperation. Minister Rezende provided an overview of Brazil's expanding science and technology initiatives as well as directions for future U.S.-Brazilian collaboration. The U.S. and Brazilian delegations discussed a range of ongoing bilateral cooperation and joint research endeavors relating to space and earth observation, climate change, agriculture, biofuels, emerging green energy technologies, and public health.

[Read More](#)

Congo Basin Forest Partnership Ministerial Plenary

YAOUNDE, CAMEROON, Nov. 12 -- Daniel A. Reifsnyder, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs discussed the Congo Basin Forest Partnership at a Ministerial Plenary meeting. He highlighted some key achievements that the partnership has supported:

- The development of national parks and other protected areas;
- Stronger forest concession management; and
- Improved capacity for community management of local resources.

"In our view, the CBFP now serves as a leading example for the conservation and sustainable management of other major ecosystems of global importance," he said.

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